

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

174

54-M
Action
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SECRET

(b) (1) (a) 3, 5

Control: 18280

Rec'd: October 25, 1962

2:49 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MP

Info FROM: Tunis

SS TO: Secretary of State

G SP NO: 273, October 25, 4 p.m.

L SAL PRIORITY

EUR DEPCIRTEL 726, EMBTELS 271 and 272, DOWNGRADE TS to () SCR () C, OADR

I P RMR

1. In call on Foreign Minister Mongi Slim yesterday I raised question of denying over-flights Soviet aircraft (paragraphs C and D DEPCIRTEL 726). Slim promised to look into question and reply shortly.

2. Paragraph five DEPCIRTEL 726: In view Bourguiba's role as principal architect Tunisian policy [and his appreciation personal attention,] believe it would be useful for President send him message along following lines: "Ambassador Russell has informed me of your statement to him expressing understanding of the action which the United States is taking to prevent the extension of nuclear armaments into the Western Hemisphere and of your assurance that Tunisia will be on the side of the free world in any event of serious trouble. In face of the critical situation which the Soviets have deliberately provoked, I deeply appreciate the understanding you have shown of the nature of the problem and the danger facing all countries who believe in liberty and the principles you have so frequently and eloquently enunciated.

"I know that Ambassador Russell will keep you fully informed of all significant developments."

3. Embassy agrees with Bourguiba's expressed doubt (EMBTEL 271) public declaration by him not particularly called for at this time. [We believe it best restrain from pressing him for statement until it likely be especially useful; possibly in context UN debate. (Essafi of Foreign Ministry told

Embassy

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-2- 273, October 25, 4 p.m., from: Tunis

Embassy Officer this morning that Bourguiba and Foreign Minister giving careful consideration to possible public statement.) Worth noting straight-forward statement by Bourguiba in support US position would put him in sharp opposition with neighboring Algeria with all efforts now being made to improve relations. Also forthright pro-West statement by Bourguiba would put him well in front of Tunisian public opinion which not likely be too receptive to statement separating Tunisia from other "neutral" countries.

(b)(1)
(g) (1)(s)

4. Embassy assessment is that public opinion here (EMBTEL 272) would be most influenced by stressing following points: A) Difference between Soviet bases in Cuba and Western bases in Turkey; B) Fact US action directed against build-up of aggressive military power in Western Hemisphere and is not preventing basic necessities from entering Cuba; C) Solidarity of Latin American states and right of nations in Western Hemisphere to take preventive action against establishment nuclear attack potential posing threat to their security and freedom; D) More details re difference between "quarantine" and "blockade" citing legal bases and precedents.

RUSSELL

DMJ

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EXCISED COPY FOLLOWS

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REVIEWED by JL DATE 3/3/68
(RELEASE) (DECLASSIFY)
(EXCISE) (DECLASSIFY in PART)
(DENY) (Non-responsive info.)
FOI, EO or PA exemptions (b)
T3 authority to: (CLASSIFY as) OADR
(DOWNGRADED T3 to) (G cr) (C, OADR

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